

MONSIEUR TONSON.

A TALE.

WRITTEN BY

MR. TAYLOR,

AND RECITED IN LONDON

BY

MR. FAWCET,

TO CROWDED AUDIENCES WITH UNIVERSAL
APPLAUSE.

GLASGOW:

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MONSIEUR TONSON.

I.

THERE liv'd, as Fame reports, in days of yore,
At least some fifty years ago, or more,

A pleasant Wight in town, nam'd TOM KING,
A fellow that was clever at a joke,
Expert in all the arts to tease and *smoke*,
In short for strokes of humour quite *the thing*.

II.

'To many a jovial Club TOM KING was known,
With whom his active wit unrivall'd shone—

Choice Spirit, grave Free Mason, Buck and Blood,
Would crowd his Stories and *Ben Mots* to hear,
And none a disappointment e'er could fear,
'Tom's humour flow'd in such a copious flood.

III.

'To him a frolic was a high delight—

A frolic Tom would hunt for day and night,

Careless how Prudence on the sport might frown;
If e'er a pleasant mischief sprang to view,
At once o'er hedge and ditch away Tom flew,
Nor left the game till he had run it down.

IV.

One night our Hero, rambling with a friend,
 Near fam'd St. Giles's chanc'd his course to bend,
 Just by that spot the Seven Dials height;—
 'Twas silence all around, clear was the coast,
 The watch, as usual, dozing on his post,
 And scarce a lamp display'd a twinkling light.

V.

Around this place there liv'd the num'rous clans
 Of honest, plodding, Foreign Artizans,
 Known at that time by name of Refugees—
 The rod of Persecution from their home
 Compell'd the inoffensive race to roam,
 And here they lighted, like a swarm of bees.

VI.

Tom and his friend were saunt'ring thro' the street,
 In hopes some food for humour soon to meet,
 When, in a window near, a light they view;
 And though a dim and melancholy ray,
 It seem'd the prologue to some merry play,
 So tow'rd's the gloomy dome our Hero drew.

VII.

Strait at the door Tom gave a thund'ring knock,
 (The time we may suppose near two o'clock)
 "I'll ask," says KING, "if THOMSON lodges here,"—
 "THOMSON," criest'other, "who the devil's he?"
 "I know not," KING replies, "but want to see
 "What kind of animal will now appear."

VIII.

After some time a little Frenchman came,
 One hand display'd a rush light's trembling flame,

'The other held the thing they call *culotte*;
 An old strip'd woollen night-cap grac'd his head,
 A tatter'd waistcoat o'er one shoulder spread,
 Scarce half awake, he heav'd a yawning note.

IX.

Though thus untimely rous'd, he courteous smil'd,
 And soon address'd our Wag in accents mild,
 Bending his head politely to his knee—

"Pray, Sare, vat want you, dat you come so late?"

"I beg your pardon, Sare, to make you wait;

"Pray, tell me, Sare, vat your commands vid me!"

X.

"Sir," reply'd KING, I merely thought to know,

"As by your house I chanc'd to-night to go—

"But really, I disturb'd your sleep, I fear—

"I say, I thought that you perhaps could tell,

"Among the folks who in this street may dwell,

"If there's a Mr. THOMSON lodges here?"

XI.

The flin'ing Frenchman, tho' not pleas'd to find
 The business of this unimportant kind,

Too simple to suspect 'twas meant in jeer,
 Shrug'd out a sigh, that thus his rest should break,
 Then, with unalter'd courtesy, he spake—

"No, Sare; no Monsieur TONSON loges here."

XII.

Our Wag begg'd pardon, and tow'rd's home he sped,
 While the poor Frenchman crawl'd again to bed;

But KING resolv'd not thus to drop the jest;
 So the next night, with more of whim than grace,

Again he made a visit to the place,
To break once more the poor old Frenchman's rest.

XIII.

TOM knock'd,—but waited longer than before,
No footstep seem'd approaching to the door;
Our Frenchman lay in such a sleep profound—
TOM, with the knocker, thunder'd then again,
Firm on his post determin'd to remain;
And oft, indeed, he made the door resound.

XIV.

At last TOM hears him o'er the passage creep,
Wond'ring what fiend again disturb'd his sleep;
The WAG salutes him with a civil leer;
Thus drawling out, to heighten the surprize,
(While the poor Frenchman rubb'd his heavy eyes)
“Is there—a Mr. THOMSON—lodges here?”

XV.

The Frenchman falter'd, with a kind of fright—
“Vy, Sare, I'm sure, I tell you, Sare, last night—
(And here he labour'd with a sigh sincere)
“No Monsieur TONSON in de varld I know,
“No Monsieur TONSON here—I tell you so;
“Indeed, Sare, dere no Monsieur TONSON loges here.”

XVI.

Some more excuses tender'd, off KING goes,
And the old Frenchman sought once more repose.
The rogue next night pursu'd his odd career—
’Twas long indeed before the man came nigh,
And then he utter'd, in a piteous cry,
“Sare, ’pon my soul, no Monsieur TONSON here!”

XVII.

Our sportive Wight his usual visit paid,
 And the next night came forth a prattling Maid,
 Whose tongue, indeed, than any jack went faster—
 Anxious she strove Tom's errand to enquire;
 He said, " 'Twas vain her pretty tongue to tire,
 " He should not stir till he had seen her Master."

XVIII.

The damsel then began in doleful state,
 The Frenchman's broken slumbers to relate,
 And begg'd he'd call at proper time of day—
 Tom told her, she must fetch her Master down,
 A chaise was ready—he was leaving Town,
 But first had much of deep concern to say.

XIX.

Thus urg'd, she went the snoring man to call,
 And long, indeed, was she oblig'd to bawl,
 Ere she could rouse the torpid lump of clay.
 At last he wakes—he rises—and he swears,
 But scarcely had he totter'd down the stairs,
 When Tom attacks him in the usual way.

XX.

The Frenchman now perceiv'd 'twas all in vain
 To this tormentor mildly to complain,
 And strait in rage began his crest to rear—
 " Sare, vat the devil make you treat me so?
 " Sare, I inform you, Sare, tree nights ago,
 " Got tam, I swear, no Monsieur Tonson here."

XXI.

True as the night, Tom went, and heard a strife
 Between the harras'd Frenchman and his Wife,

Which should descend to chase the fiend away;
 At length to join their forces they agree,
 And strait impetuously they turn the key,
 Pepar'd with mutual fury for the fray.

XXII.

Our Hero, with the firmness of a rock,
 Collected to receive the mighty shock,
 Uttering the old enquiry, calmly stood—
 The name of THOMSON rais'd the storm so high—
 Tom deem'd it then the safest plan to fly,
 With—" Well, I'll call when you're in gentler mood."

XXIII.

In short, our Hero, with the same intent,
 Full many a night to plague the Frenchman went—
 So fond of mischief was the wicked wit.
 They throw out water—for the watch they call,
 But Tom expecting, still escapes from all—
 Monsieur at last was forc'd his house to quit.

XXIV.

It happen'd that our wag, about this time,
 On some fair prospect sought the Eastern clime:
 Six ling'ring years were there his tedious lot;
 At length, content, amid his rip'ning store,
 Tom treads again on Britain's happy shore,
 And his long absence is at once forgot.

XXV.

To London with impatient hope Tom flies,
 And the same night, as former freaks arise,

TOM fain must stroll, the well-known haunt to trace,
 "Ah! here's the scene of frequent mirth," TOM said:
 "My poor old Frenchman, I suppose, is dead—
 "Egad! I'll knock, and see who holds his place."

XXVI.

With rapid strokes TOM makes the mansion roar,
 And while he eager eyes the op'ning door,
 Lo! who obeys the knocker's rattling peal?
 Why e'en our little Frenchman, strange to say,
 He took his old abode that very day—
 Capricious turn of sportive Fortune's Wheel!

XXVII.

Without one thought of the relentless foe,
 Who, fiend-like, haunted him six years ago,
 Just in his former trim he now appears;
 The waistcoat and the night-cap seem'd the same,
 With rush-light, as before, he creeping came,
 And TOM's detested voice astonish'd hears.

XXVIII.

As if some hideous spectre struck his sight,
 His senses seem'd bewilder'd with affright;
 His face, indeed, bespoke a heart full fore—
 Then, starting, he exclaim'd, in rueful strain,
 "*Begar! here's Monsieur TONSON come again!*"
 Away he ran—and ne'er was heard of more.

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